

## **Census Towns as a Major Research Project (MjRP) under SCUS**

The SCUS has been granted a Major Research Project (MjRP) from Symbiosis International (Deemed University) (SIU) for two years from March 2022 - April 2024. The project is titled “A Study of Governance and Livability of the Census Towns in Pune, Maharashtra”.

This project focuses on assessing the governance and livability aspects of Census Towns in Pune, Maharashtra. Census Towns are urban areas with a population exceeding 5,000, yet lacking full-fledged municipal status.

The project covers a study of 19 Census Towns in the Pune district, out of these, eight have been converted into ULBs and two have merged with Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), the rest are still governed by Gram Panchayats. The project involves collecting both primary and secondary data and is an exploratory study. It is based on the following objectives;

1. To study the present **state of governance structures** of CTs in the Pune District of Maharashtra.
2. To assess the **livability status** of CTs in the Pune District.
3. To understand the **impact** of COVID-19 with respect to health, education, mobility and the economy (livelihoods) in CTs within Pune District.
4. To understand various **stakeholders’** perspectives with respect to governance and livability of the CTs.
5. To provide a set of **recommendations** to improve livability and governance of the CTs.

Through a combination of quantitative data analysis and qualitative research methods, the project seeks to provide insights into the challenges faced by these areas and propose recommendations for improved governance and enhanced livability. This research is valuable for understanding the urban dynamics of rapidly growing areas that fall in the intermediate zone between rural and fully urban, shedding light on their unique governance needs and potential for sustainable development. Census Towns in Pune, Maharashtra, represent a unique urban demographic. They have witnessed significant population growth but lack full-fledged municipal status. While these areas hold promise, they also face distinct challenges such as inadequate sources of revenue for the administration, usage of the old sewage systems, lack of adequate transportation facilities and poor quality of the roads, irregular water supply and water quality issues, lack of updated data on critical indicators like AQI, forest cover, etc.

Despite these challenges, the Census Towns in Pune have the potential to evolve into vibrant urban centers. Addressing these challenges requires a combination of government support, community involvement, targeted investments and conversion of their status from rural (RLBs) to urban areas (ULBs). By doing so, these towns can improve livability, boost economic growth, and contribute to the overall development of the region.

### **The project has the following members associated with it;**

1. **PI** - Prof. Jyoti Chandiramani
2. **CO PI** - Dr. Gargi Patil, Dr. Shuchi Misra, Dr. Chandani Tiwari, Dr. Sabyasachi Tripathi and Dr. Ashwini Shende
3. **RAs on the project** - Mr. Amey Khare and Miss. Sanika Ranade